

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /147 W

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R 010536Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8593

S E C R E T SAIGON 18799

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI PINS PINT VS

SUBJECT: MONTHLY MR-1 COMMANDER'S CONFERENCE

THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM AMCONSUL DANANG DATED OCT 31
SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO BIEN HOA CAN THO NHA TRANG DAO/SAIGON
IS REPEATED HERE FOR YOUR ACTION:

QUOTE

DANANG 1188

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, VS

SUBJECT: MONTHLY MR-1 COMMANDER'S CONFERENCE

1. ON OCTOBER 28, LT. GENERAL NGO QUANG TRUONG, COM-
MANDING GENERAL OF MR-1/I CORPS, CHAIRED A LENGTHY AND
COMPREHENSIVE MONTHLY COMMANDER'S CONFERENCE. GIVEN
PARTICULAR FOCUS AT THE CONFERENCE WAS THE STATUS OF
SUPPLIES AND DISTRIBUTION OF RICE IN MR-1. THE LOCAL
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMY REPORTED ON
THE SITUATION FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE. HE ASSERTED THAT
MR-1 CURRENTLY HAS SUFFICIENT RICE TO FEED ITS POPU-
LATION UNTIL THE END OF 1973. HE UNDERWENT SHARP
QUESTIONING FROM THE ASSEMBLED PROVINCE CHIEFS, SEVERAL
OF WHOM COMPLAINED OF DEFECTS IN THE DISTRIBUTION
SYSTEM. DEPUTY MR-1 COMMANDER, MAJOR GENERAL HOANG VAN

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LAC, ALSO DISCUSSED THE RICE SITUATION AND SUGGESTED

COURSES OF ACTION FOR THE ECONOMY MINISTRY OFFICIALS AND PROVINCE CHIEFS TO FOLLOW TO IMPROVE DISTRIBUTION. (DETAILS OF THE RICE SUPPLY DISCUSSION WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY.)

2. THE TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER DIRECTOR, LTC. LE HUU TU, BRIEFED ON THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE TOC. TU STRESSED THAT REPORTING TO THE TOC MUST BE SPEEDY AND ACCURATE, THAT RVNAF LOSSES SHOULD NOT BE CONCEALED NOR COMMUNIST LOSSES INFLATED.

3. THE POLITICAL WARFARE DIVISION CHIEF, COL. PHAN PHIEN, REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON THE STATUS OF DEPENDENTS' HOUSING. HE SUGGESTED THAT AN EXPERIMENTAL VILLAGE FOR MILITARY DEPENDENTS BE ESTABLISHED IN THE 3RD ARVN DIVISION'S AREA OF OPERATIONS (ROUGHLY, QUANG NAM PROVINCE), INCORPORATING SOME OF THE IDEAS SUGGESTED IN HIS BRIEFING, SUCH AS BUILDING DEPENDENT HOUSING UNITS AS TWIN HOUSES RATHER THAN IN ROWS, PLACING THEM CONVENIENT TO CULTIVABLE LAND, AND MAKING PROVISION FOR THE SOLDIER'S FAMILIES TO BUY THE HOUSES AS AN INCENTIVE TO PROPER MAINTENANCE OF THE UNITS.

4. EACH OF MR-1'S FIVE PROVINCE CHIEFS REPORTED AT LENGTH ON THE OVERALL SITUATION IN THEIR SECTORS, BOTH IN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY SPHERES, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE STATUS OF WAR REFUGEES, WAR VICTIMS, AND RETURN-TO-VILLAGE PROGRAMS. SOME COMPLAINED OF SHORTAGES OF UNIFORMS OR PONCHOS FOR THEIR TERRITORIAL FORCES, AND MENTIONED OTHER LOCAL PROBLEMS. THE QUANG TIN PROVINCE CHIEF, COL. DAO MONG XUAN, FOR EXAMPLE, REQUESTED THAT IN VIEW OF WHAT HE TERMED THE INCREASE IN ACTIVITY IN HIS PROVINCE COMPARED TO THE QUIETER SITUATION IN QUANG NGAI, ONE REGIMENT OF THE 2ND ARVN DIVISION STATIONED IN QUANG NGAI AND ONE ENGINEERING COMPANY BE TRANSFERRED TO QUANG TIN.

5. THE PROVINCE CHIEFS ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE STATUS OF THEIR ESTABLISHMENT OF TACTICAL COMMAND POSTS FOR THE MORE EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION AND COORDINATION OF REGIONAL

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FORCES, APPARENTLY IN RESPONSE TO GENERAL TRUONG'S INSTRUCTION TO THEM AT THE SEPTEMBER COMMANDER'S CONFERENCE TO PLAN AND COORDINATE THE USE OF RF MORE EFFECTIVELY. (SEE DANANG'S 1090.)

6. ON A RELATED SUBJECT, THE QUANG NAM PROVINCE CHIEF, COL. PHAM VAN CHUNG, RECEIVED GENERAL TRUONG'S PRAISE FOR A PLAN HE ANNOUNCED TO ORGANIZE SMALL STRIKE FORCE

TEAMS WITH PEOPLE'S SELF-DEFENSE FORCES (PSDF). THESE TEAMS WOULD RECEIVE MILITARY TRAINING BEYOND THAT NORMALLY GIVEN TO PSDF, AND WOULD BE USED TO CONDUCT PATROLS, SET AMBUSHES TO PREVENT COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO VILLAGES, AND PREVENT FOOD DIVERSION. TRUONG COMMENDED THIS PLAN TO THE OTHER PROVINCE CHIEFS, BUT WARNED THAT SUCH TEAMS SHOULD BE ORGANIZED PROPERLY.

7. IN HIS QUESTIONING OF PROVINCE CHIEFS FOLLOWING THEIR PRESENTATIONS, TRUONG SHOWED HIMSELF WELL-INFORMED ON LOCAL PROBLEMS, OCCASIONALLY TO THE EMBARRASSMENT OF THE PROVINCE CHIEF. THUA THIEN'S COL. TON THAT KHIEH WAS ASKED BY TRUONG WHETHER HE HAD ANY PROBLEM AREAS, AND WHEN KHIEH CONCLUDED HIS STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS, TRUONG ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHETHER MALARIA WAS A PROBLEM IN HIS SECTOR. KHIEH REPLIED THAT HIS TROOPS HAD BEEN SUPPLIED ANTI-MALARIA PILLS, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOME 30 OF THE TROOPS BELONGING TO THE 129TH RF BATTALION FIGHTING IN THE BACH MA AREA (SEE DANANG 1164 FOR AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RVNAF LOSS OF THIS OUTPOST) HAVE MALARIA. TRUONG THEN CALLED UPON A COLONEL ON HIS STAFF, WHO REPORTED THAT ON A RECENT INSPECTION TRIP HE HAD FOUND THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF THE MEN IN THE 129TH RF BATTALION HAD MALARIA. IN ADDITION THE COLONEL CLAIMED THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY A SERGEANT WITH A UNIT OPERATING AT MO TAU, ALSO IN THUA THIEN PROVINCE, THAT THE MEN HAD NOT RECEIVED THEIR ANTI-MALARIA PILLS, WHICH WAS THE REASON THE UNIT HAD A HIGHER MALARIA RATE THAN OTHER UNITS. TRUONG THEN DIRECTED COL. KHIEH TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF HIS SUBORDINATE UNITS.

POPPL
UNQUOTE.

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Message Attributes

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